

14 December 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Skills Banking -- A Status Report

1. This memorandum reviews six weeks of Skills Banking, indicates some changes we are making as the result of this experience, and, importantly, leaves to your decision the question of supporting a key change put forth in paragraph 8, reiterated in paragraph 10.

2. In the six weeks the Skills Bank has been operating, it has more than justified our confidence that it would work to the definite advantage of both customer components and the placement arms of the Office of Personnel. The Agency and the strong applicant are co-beneficiaries of this technique designed to speed applicant files into clearance processing while eliminating weaker applicants. This has held true on both counts.

3. We launched the Skills Bank operation with the willingness to make certain concessions we deemed wise if we were to keep competitive peace in the CIA family. There obviously was concern expressed that we might use the Bank to do a component out of a candidate who clearly would have belonged to that component under the old system of shopping a file. In effect, the first component that saw and wanted the file got the applicant. This stopped other components from checking out the candidate's credentials even though they might have been equally attractive to another component.

4. I now view the concessions made as not working necessarily to the advantage of the component concerned or to the applicant himself.

5. The Skills Bank system itself, operating by and large as a free market, has considerably more to recommend it than any closed circuit of concessions or priorities. Not that there has been any sinister or wholesale departure from the system. But, for example, we have adhered to the practice

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of not banking an applicant file in those cases where a given component's operating official has generated, or by co-recruiting with a Recruitment Division representative, has helped to generate a live file. We have sent these cases directly to the component to acknowledge receipt of completed forms, cut a Security Initiation action, and follow through in pursuit of the candidate. This seemed to us a logical approach.

6. What has happened in some of these cases, however, disturbs me. In some cases the forms are not being acknowledged; in others, the operating official was not empowered to commit his Office in the field; and, in still others, the representative of one Office, speaking for another Office in his Directorate, has been wide of the latter's qualifications mark. These cases have been surfacing primarily in the Directorate of Science and Technology.

7. Further, we have been giving ORR priority, that is, non-banked assignment of all holders of graduate degrees in Economics, plus all baccalaureate degree holders recruited by ORR representatives either independently or working in tandem with an RD recruiter. In these DDS&T and ORR cases, therefore, the file has not remained in the Skills Bank for the two-week open inspection period.

8. I would propose now that all completed applicant files, regardless of recruitment origin, be deposited in the Skills Bank for open inspection throughout the two-week period, and that the applicant receive OP notification of receipt of his papers with the advice they are under review. I see the applicant, who may not be fully committed, in his own mind, to a given component being accorded a broader review of his employment chances, and, quite frankly, I foresee an Office insisting upon its prior claim to a given candidate being overruled by a Deputy Director in favor of another Office within the Directorate, or being overruled by authorities outside the Directorate in favor of placement in another Directorate, the Career Training Program, or the Office of the Director.

9. In appropriate cases where the clearance time remaining to the Agency is extremely short, Applicant Selection Branch will initiate SI action while the case is still in the Bank for open inspection, thus offsetting any complaint that OP is costing a component a candidate by refusing to release the file immediately.

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10. On the whole, the applicant file will end up with the component that has staked out its claim, so to speak, but OP must be protected in the unforeseen event a given applicant is better suited to a different assignment or, if not this, is more desperately needed by another component. This we can learn only by giving all components access to all new applicant files. As matters stand, I would need your backing to reincorporate this procedure in the Skills Bank operation as basically conceived. I think we can make this change with the best of intent and good will, even though we will hear complaints at the outset.

11. At the moment I would put only the Career Training Program in the exempted category. We have fixed quotas to meet here and we can do so only by making arbitrary CTP commitments. We now list all CTP-committed files but do not bank them; we list them for the purpose of alerting CTP customers that a given candidate is in process--permitting an interested component to make earmarking arrangements with Chief, CTP for delivery of the student when his CTP training is completed.

12. These are the basic changes I would incorporate in our present Skills Bank modus operandi. The system itself dictates it. We are already far removed from the day when a good candidate was rejected simply because OP fails to shop his file to the right component. We must bank all new files, however, if we are to make certain that the best possible placement materializes. We have had as many as nine components bidding for the same candidate under our present system. We are beyond the day, too, when weak candidates were hired because they were not being compared uniformly, systematically, and almost simultaneously with better candidates. Weak candidates are now eliminating themselves--and in a period of two weeks, thus not remaining in shopping channels to clutter up routing and storage procedures.

13. One of the greatest dividends we are deriving from Skills Banking is in the Resumes category. Placing resumes in the Bank has resulted in some real revelations. We are learning, for example, of component interest in qualifications that were never cited in Recruitment Requisitions. We are learning too of a component's willingness to give and take on other particulars of a Requisition, such as age, sex, education, etc., "because the resume rounds out to the type of person we can use." What this means is we are afraid to reject a write-in (resume) candidate out of hand--as may have been our wont in weeks past--for lack of matching qualifications. We put even the most marginal-looking resumes in

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the Bank now and not infrequently hit some hidden target.


14. We have to make a modus operandi change in our Resume wing of the Bank, however, because we have been too quick to send the resume on to the recruiter with the first indication of interest. This is good in one respect--it gets the prospect interviewed sooner--but self-defeating in other respects. For example, when three or four components review a resume the first day it is in the Bank--say a computer specialist--, we can send the resume to the recruiter with such advice as "No NPIC or OCR, but OCS and RID Interest." This is good in that it enables the recruiter to zero in on the candidate. However, if we have a different reviewing period situation, the recruiter gets the resume with advice only to the extent that, say, "OCI has interest." In other words, we got one bidder in, say, a three-day period, and withdrew the resume for dispatch to the field. The recruiter, examining the same resume, is at a loss to understand why perhaps a half-dozen components hadn't expressed interest. Obviously, what we plan to do henceforth is keep the Resume on file for the same two-week open inspection period so as to gather as much guidance as possible for the recruiter and candidate concerned. This we can do without upsetting any customers or incurring the risks that are inherent, as cited above, in by-passing the Bank with so-called prior commitment applicant files.

15. In all of this, you must be wondering how we manage the allocation of applicant files wherein more than one component has strong interest. Quite frankly, we just have to live with some of our own decisions, invoke Solomon-like mediation in other cases, and offer all the right of appeal to the Director of Personnel. You may be getting your first case any day now. Our only safe defense mechanism will come as the result of fixed requirements, known strength, carefully estimated attrition, and measurable pipeline loads. We should soon be achieving all of these statistical desiderata, and it will make life more livable for our Applicant Selection Branch.

16. I would only add by way of this review that we have had several discussions with Chief, A&E Staff, pertinent to the importance of his providing a rapid readout of FCDP test results for those completed files about to be deposited in the Skills Bank. We believe we are in reasonably good shape

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in this regard, but any A&E backlogging will cause serious delays in the banking and further processing of new applicants.


Deputy Director of Personnel
for
Recruitment and Placement

STAT

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Personnel 15

FROM:

DD/Pers/FP

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

14 December 1966

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

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OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

Director of Personnel

2.

Deputy Director of
Support

3.

Director of Personnel

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Distribution:

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✓ 1 - DD/S Subject w/att DD/S 66-6590

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1 to 2:

I could add several other arguments to those presented by Rex from running an "open"- "competitive" skills bank. I am not at all worried about the occasional contest of multiple components for a single applicant. The best interests of the Agency can easily be resolved by reasoning people or by arbitrary decision if necessary.

Unless you disagree with Rex's principles I will proceed to implement. STAT

Emmett D. Echols

1 to 3:

Mr. Bannerman was briefed on this today. He sees no reason why you should not proceed along the lines indicated in paragraphs 8 and 10.

STAT